

Timothy O'Halloran
Principal
Somerville High School
222 Davenport Street, Somerville, NJ 08876
Category: Secondary School Principal – Central Region

During the last ten years at Somerville High School, principal Timothy O'Halloran has instituted a comprehensive inclusion program, a formal Advanced Placement program, increased the elective offerings, and created a systemic curriculum revision plan and textbook replacement program. "Somerville High School is in a constant analysis of its programs and offerings to ensure that all needs of our students are met," said O'Halloran. Recently, O'Halloran secured a \$10,000 private donation to help defray the costs of equipment for a Career Center for students. Another program, Project Lead the Way, which is a computer based sequence of courses that expose students to various components of engineering, was initiated and created an environment where students of varying abilities could work together.

Aligning the curriculum with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards, O'Halloran makes sure that teachers must demonstrate, through lesson plan development, which standards are being met. Throughout his career at Somerville High School, O'Halloran has increased the amount of budget allocations for supplies, texts and technology. He spearheaded the effort to ensure training and professional development for teachers and created a master schedule which has a common prep time for each department.

Students have the opportunity to participate in a Peer Leadership program. The Renaissance Program, which provides academic achievement incentives for students, was initiated to reward not only honor roll students but also those students who display an increase in their GPA from one marking period to the next.

O'Halloran believes that parents play an important role in student success. As principal, he instituted a parent teacher organization and during Middle States Evaluation he sought input from parents and the community about the school's goals and curriculum. Somerville High School also has a strong relationship with Johnson & Johnson, Roche Diagnostics and Chubb, which enables the school to receive funding for various projects. This past year, Somerville High School was utilized to film a commercial for the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce's School Counts program. The business community also helps Somerville students with job shadowing and work release programs.

O'Halloran is a graduate of St. Peter's College and earned his master's degree from Jersey City State College. He taught mathematics in Linden, Keyport and Keansburg before launching his administrative career in Somerville in 1991. O'Halloran is currently NJPSA Vice President. He belongs to NASSP, ASCD and the Somerset County Secondary Schools Principals Association.

"Tim is a visionary leader who elevated Somerville High School from a good high school to an extraordinary high school," says Dr. Carolyn Leary, Superintendent of Schools. "His focus on curriculum, the student learning process, technology, course innovations, encouraging the reluctant learner, pre-engineering programs, high school and college alternative programs have brought Somerville High School to the cutting edge of educational excellence."